

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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### FOUR ZOOS TO BE HONORED FOR PRODUCING TRUMPETER SWANS

The Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife announced that it will award plaques to four zoos which have produced 37 trumpeter swans in captivity during the past four years. This marks the first time this species has been bred in captivity.

Zoos to be honored are the Brit Spaugb Park and Zoo, Great Bend, Kansas; Philadelphia Zoological Gardens, Philadelphia, Pa.; Tracy Aviary, Salt Lake City, Utah; and Mesker Park Zoo, Evansville, Ind.

Their successes have increased the population of captive trumpeters in the United States to 106 (97 adult and 9 young). The Bureau began lending trumpeters to selected zoos in 1957 because of their increasing abundance in the wild.

These swans are now on display in 53 zoos, 5 of them outside the United States. Salt Lake City has 8, Great Bend 6, and other zoos have 3 or less.

The first offspring of captive trumpeters were hatched June 25, 1965, at the nation's oldest zoo in Philadelphia. Since that time, Great Bend has produced 21 cygnets, as young swans are called, Philadelphia 8, Salt Lake City 6, and Evansville 1. Nine cygnets were hatched in 1968--5 at Salt Lake City and 4 at Great Bend.

The recovery of the trumpeter has been so remarkable that the Bureau removed the species from the list of "rare wildlife" last December.

In 1900, the bird was nearly extinct in the United States, due in part to excessive hunting. It has been protected by Federal and State laws since 1918.

In the early 1930's, Government biologists found 33 trumpeters near Yellowstone National Park. The discovery led to establishment of Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in nearby Montana in 1935. Transplants to other refuges began four years later.

There are now breeding trumpeter swan populations on Kenai National Moose Range, Alaska; National Elk Refuge, Wyoming; Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Nevada; Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, Washington; and Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge, South Dakota.

Populations have increased dramatically, from 69 in the 48 contiguous States in 1932 to 799 counted during the Bureau's aerial survey last fall.

In addition, more than 2,800 were counted last year in Alaska, bringing the total United States population to an estimated 4,000 to 5,000. Additional trumpeters are in Canada.

Largest of American waterfowl, the trumpeter swan has an impressive voice. At maturity it stands 3 to 3½ feet tall, weighs 20 to 30 pounds, has a wingspread of 7 to 8 feet and a snow-white body. Immature birds are grayish.

The success in saving the trumpeter from extinction has sparked efforts by Federal and State governments to preserve many other endangered or rare species of American wildlife for the enjoyment of future generations.